



Pharmacy and Drug Lore in Antiquity

Greece, Rome, Byzantium

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Professor Scarborough brings together here fourteen of his essays on ancient drugs and pharmacy, dealing with aspects of a pharmacology and medical botany that incorporate magic, astrology, and alchemy, as well as the expected theoretical constructs of elements, qualities, and humors. Clinical application of salves for burns was a skill of long standing, as one essay demonstrates, and another suggests Hippocratic pharmacology's sophistication, as does consideration of the herbal lore in Theophrastus' remarkable Enquiry into Plants.

A major concern among Greek, Roman, and Byzantine medical practitioners was toxicology and the fundamental collection of data on poisonous plants and animals, and two studies take up snakes, spiders, insects, and related creatures with suggested antidotes in the difficult poems of Nicander of Colophon, while another focuses on Dioscorides' perceptive analysis of the effects of the opium poppy. Aloe in the drug commerce of the early Roman Empire is considered along with the life and career of Criton, a personal physician to Trajan, and some of Galen's pharmacology as reflected in his commentaries on Hippocrates. The collection concludes with two studies that explicate early Byzantine pharmacology and how garden lore in Byzantine times contributed to practical pharmacy.

Contents

Preface; The pharmacology of sacred plants, herbs and roots; On medications for burns in classical antiquity; Theoretical assumptions in Hippocratic pharmacology; Theophrastus on herbals and herbal remedies; Nicander's toxicology, I: snakes; Nicander's toxicology, II: spiders, scorpions, insects and myriapods; The opium poppy in Hellenistic and Roman medicine; Roman pharmacy and the Eastern drug trade: some problems illustrated by the example of aloe; Pharmacy in Pliny's Natural History: some observations on substances and sources; The pharmacy of methodist medicine: the evidence of Soranus' Gynecology; Criton, physician to Trajan: historian and pharmacist; Pharmaceutical theory in Galen's commentaries on the Hippocratic epidemics: some observations on Roman views of Greek drug lore; Early Byzantine pharmacology; Herbs of the field and herbs of the garden in Byzantine medicinal pharmacy; Addenda and corrigenda; Indexes.

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